

STUDENTS AND ACES

New Hampshire
21st Century Community Learning Center
Programs
July 12 & 13th, 2016

ACES High



*Life is not a matter of
holding good cards but
on learning to play a
poor hand well.*

RL Stevenson

What's an ACE?

- Abuse
 - physical, emotional, sexual, neglect
- Substance abuse in household
- Incarcerated household member
- Mental illness in household
- Domestic violence (mother)
- Parental separation, divorce
- Loss of a biological parent

Normal Assumptions

- I am in control.
- I am safe.
- I am worthy.
- The world is meaningful.
- It's can't happen to me.

Janoff-Bulman (1992) (ICDR-1995-2010)

Traumatic Stress

- Overwhelming demands on the physiological system that result in a *profound felt sense* of loss of control, vulnerability, immobility. RDMacy
- A girl with autism speaks (you tube video)

Helpful Guidelines

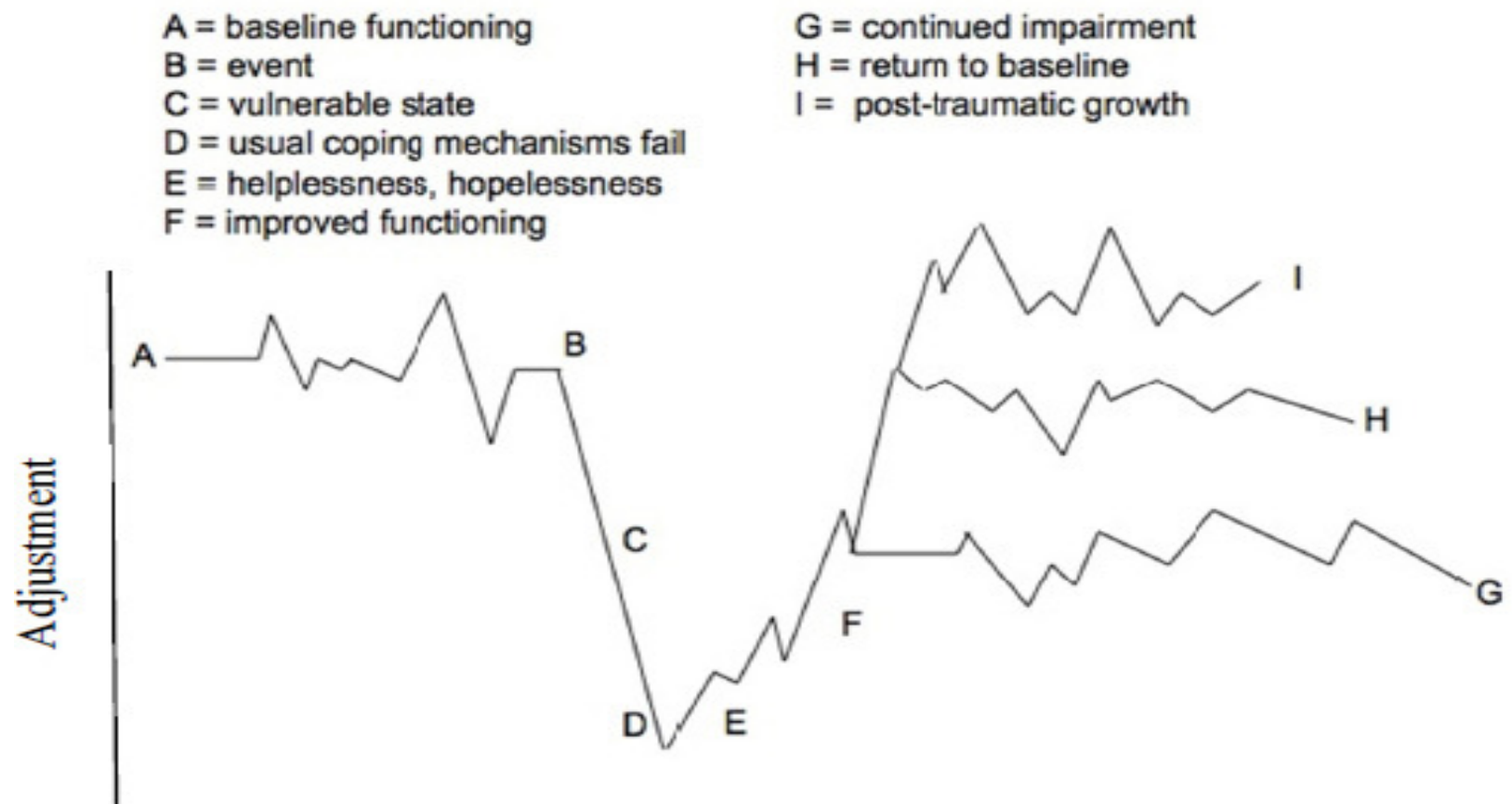
- Acknowledge the story
- Appreciate the character's struggle
- Address the impact
- Accept the ambiguity

The Narrative of ACE's

- Factual –details, what happened
- Thought—sense or meaning
- Reaction—how it felt (feels)
- Physical—the body's reaction

Adjustment over time

David Schonfeld 2014



Realize.

Recognize.

Respond.

RESIST Re-traumatization.

TRAUMA INFORMED APPROACH

Preschool

nctsn.org

- Lose recent developmental milestones
- Increase bedwetting, thumb sucking, regress similar speech
- More irritable
- Temper tantrums
- More difficulty calming
- Become very withdrawn
- Subdued
- Mute
- Falling and staying asleep
- Nightmares, bad dreams
- Process through play

Elementary nctsn.org

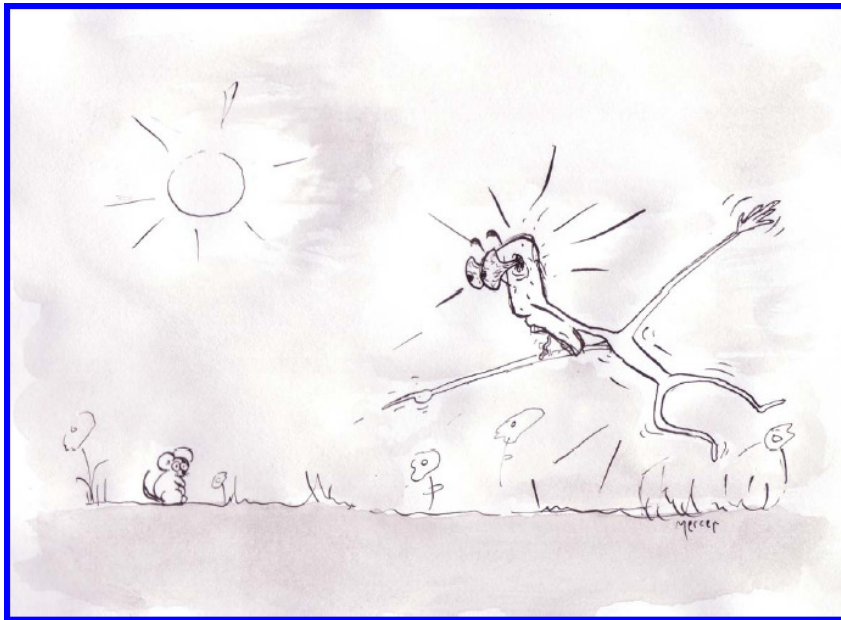
- Somatic complaints
stomachaches,
headaches, pains
- Change in behavior—
increase irritability,
aggression, anger.
- Inconsistent behaviors
- Change in school
performance
- Impaired attention and
concentration
- More absences
- Late elementary (may
excessively talk and ask
persistent questions
about event)

Middle & High School nctsn.org

- Self-conscious about emotional reactions to event
- Experience shame and guilt about event
- Fantasies of revenge and retribution
- Radical shift in view of world
- May engage self-destructive, accident prone, or reckless behavior
- Shift in interpersonal relationships
- Change in school performance, attendance, behavior

RESPOND

RELATIONAL PRESENCE



J sprague Un. Of oregon

- Expect violence or betrayal
- Self-protect
- MAY DOUBT the ability of others to help

Risking Connection

A new look at “strength-based” behavior

Which self capacities are in play?

1. Managing & modulating feelings
2. Feeling worthy of life
3. Positive connection to others

How does this behavior help?

- Seeking safety
- Worthy
- Connection
- ❖ Make sense in light of *what happened...?*

©epower@associates

Ordinary Magic

There are unique risks for child survivors of serious trauma, but in most cases, the capacity for resilience arises from very similar protective factors that I call “ordinary magic.”

Ann Masten

Framework for Resilience

Developmental Supports

- Caring relationships
- High expectations
- Opportunity to participate

Developmental Traits

- Social competence
- Problem solving
- Autonomy/identity
- Sense of purpose

Structural Importance

Intelligence unfolds in the presence of a nurturing environment. Erickson

- ☐ Safety
- ☐ Trust
- ☐ Constancy
- ☐ Predictability

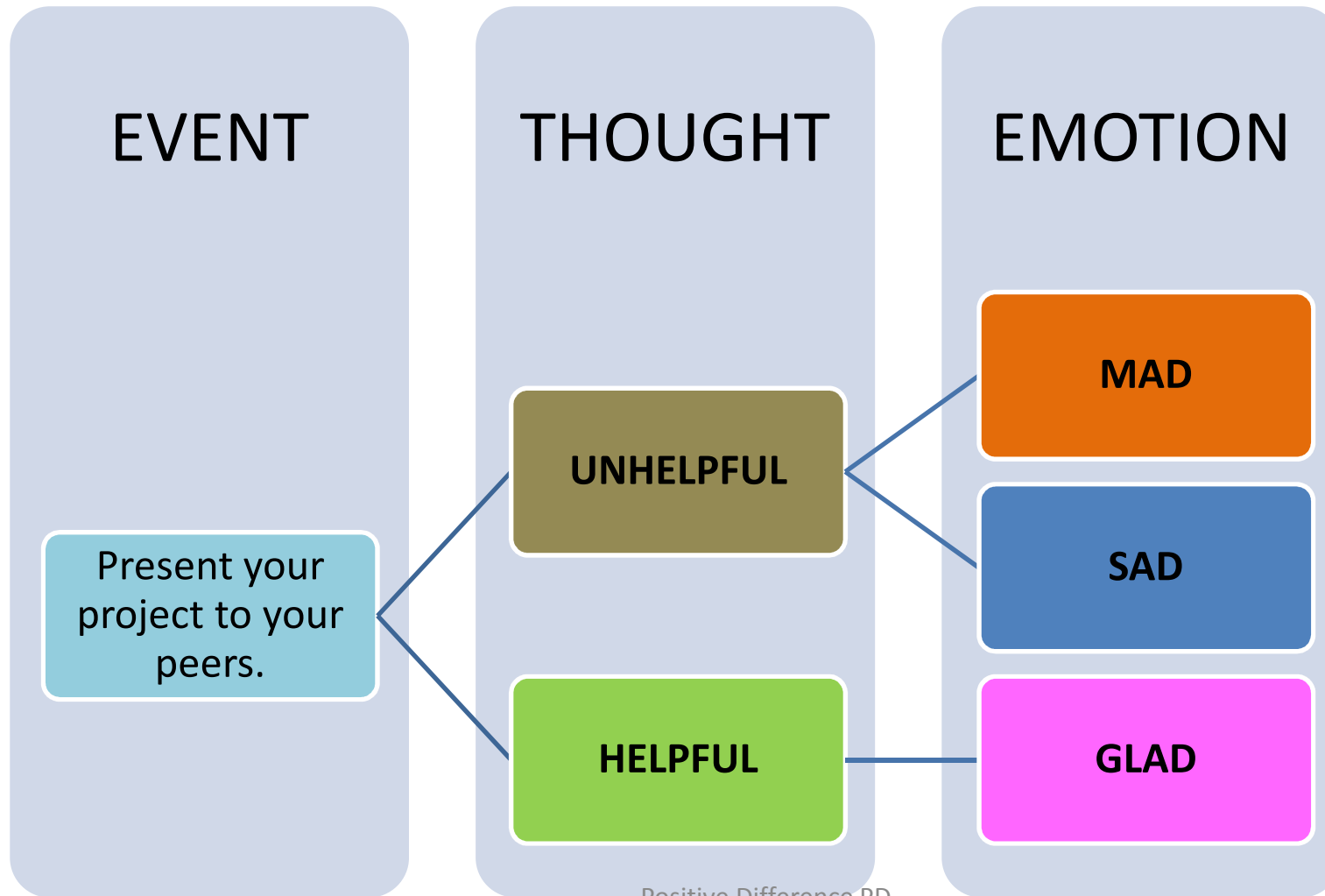
Managing Reactions

Reactive behavior has to calm before it can become response-enabled.

CALMING BREATH TECHNIQUE 15 times

- Feet on floor. Back supported.
- Eyes slightly open. Gaze at floor.
- Belly breath –4 counts in, 6 counts out.
- Palms press into thighs on in breath.
- Palms release press on out breath.

Helpful thinking



Survivors to Thrivers

Intrinsic Motivation

Deci

- **Safety & Security**
 - Connection & belonging
- **Autonomy & Self-determination**
 - Choices & decisions
 - Childhood trauma—you think you've lost your ability to choose.
- **Feel competent**
 - Trial & error

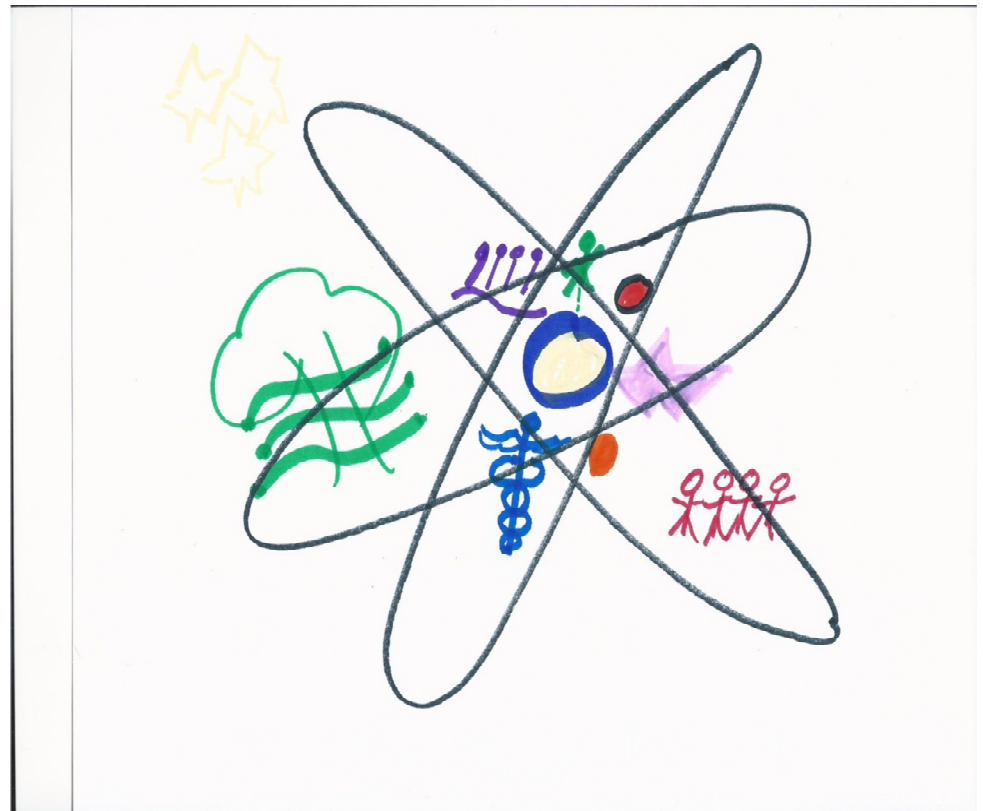
Stress Hardiness

Kobasa

- **Commitment**
 - Meaning & purpose
 - Emotional attachment
- **Challenge**
 - Change AS opportunity
- **Control**
 - “I have what it takes” belief.
 - Choices and decisions are mine.

Healthy Social Connections

- Understood & cared for
- Fit in and belong
- Feel needed & wanted
- NOT alone or isolated
- Help w problems
- Others there for me
- Good advice for difficult situations



*Don't ask someone to tolerate more than they
have the capacity to tolerate.*

RESISTING RE-TRAUMATIZATION

THE WAY WE DO THE THINGS WE DO

Helpful Resources

- NCTSN—National Child Traumatic Stress Network www.nctsn.org
- SAMHSA—Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration www.samhsa.gov
- CDC—Center for Disease Control www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/acestudy/
- www.maryfowler.com